



## Palouse Prairie Foundation

Promoting preservation and restoration of the Palouse Prairie ecosystem

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Moscow, ID 83843



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# Palouse Prairie Flyer

## Newsletter of the Palouse Prairie Foundation Winter 2021–2022

### Look at What's Coming Up



Sprouts destined for John Crock Pollinator Garden (photo by Elisabeth Brackney)

These early sprouts, pictured in mid-winter, are a teaser of the flowers yet to come. They are destined for the John Crock Pollinator Garden.

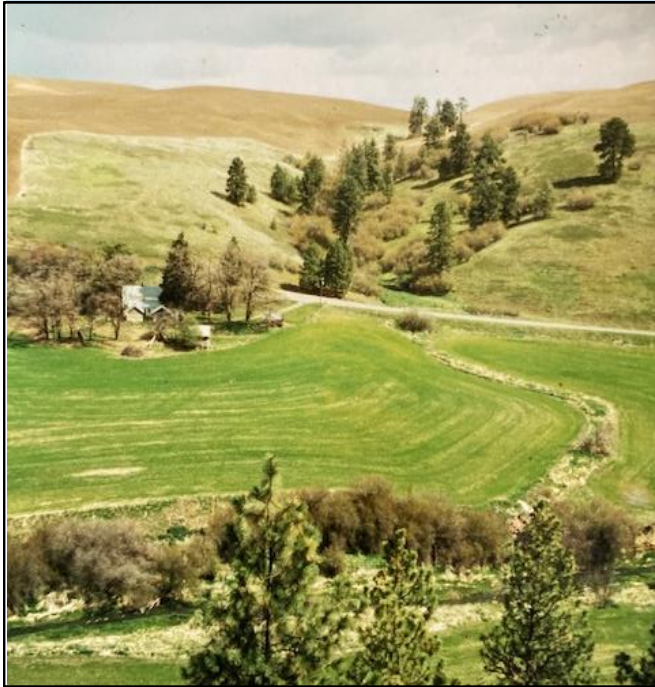
Along with the new sprouts we have new Board members. Each year the Palouse Prairie Foundation (PPF) holds its annual meeting. This year, as last, it was online. Thank you to everyone who attended. The annual reports from the officers preceded our keynote speaker Jacie Jensen of Thorn Creek Native Seed Farm. A recording of her talk “Tools for Palouse Prairie Restoration” is available on our [Palouse Prairie Foundation Community Facebook page](#). President David Hall shared election results for the 2022 Board of Directors. We are saying “welcome and hello” to Tom Besser and Ronnie Hatley and “thank you and goodbye” to Kim Sarff who resigned in December.

Here's what's included in this edition of your newsletter:

- [Controlling Reed Canary Grass—Restoring Dogwood Creek](#)
- [April Is Native Plant Month](#)
- [Meet the 2022 Board of Directors](#)
- [Are You Eligible for a Mini-Grant?](#)

# Controlling Reed Canary Grass—Restoring Dogwood Creek

by Ronnie Hatley



Dogwood Creek Canyon with a magical prairie of little sunflower, Palouse thistle, fescue, and bluebunch in the circle-of-pines; Union Flat Creek at the bottom from southwest viewpoint (photo by Ronnie Hatley)



Yellowed tufts of reed canary grass along Dogwood Creek with red canes of redosier dogwood at middle left; whitened bluebunch wheatgrass with Oregon grape hillside prairie in the foreground (photo by Ronnie Hatley)

I'm learning to control the reed canary grass (RCG) that clogs Dogwood Creek, causing flooding in the fields below my mailbox. The endgame of removing RCG is to revegetate with on-farm native shrubs—especially redosier dogwood—to overshadow the RCG, stabilize the channel, and mitigate flooding.

RCG grows vigorously, excludes other plants, and spreads by seeds, stem fragments, and rhizomes. Thus, it is difficult to control, especially in riparian areas. Weed control guides from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Washington State University, Washington Noxious Weed Control Board, and others describe several means to remove RCG: burning, cutting, cultivating, covering, spraying, and replanting with overshadowing shrubs. I will try all of these, and new ones you suggest.

A gullywasher in April 2020 clogged the already overgrown watercourse, flooding mud into the field. And the existing RCG reseeded the mud. So, in 2021 I cut off all the immature RCG seed heads and dug out some of the new plants with my Pulaski. Early this spring, I plan to burn the dry RCG stalks and scorch the new shoots on the eastern, dried-out half of the infestation. I am researching appropriate and safe herbicides to spray the new growth a month after burning. Later regrowth in summer will be cut to prevent seed formation and retard stem and rhizome growth. I may cover the strip of RCG that is too close to the creek to safely spray. This fall my neighbor will disc this treated eastern half of the watercourse. This process likely will require repeating before the channel can be relocated back to the east. Then the temporary west side ditch can be dried out, and the RCG along it can be similarly removed.

Dogwood, hawthorn, pines, aspen, chokecherry, elderberry, Oregon grape, and snowberry growing beside the creek upstream have long been holding the banks, slowing the water, and overshadowing RCG. So, this is what I have begun to replant. Vigilance of RCG reintroduction and re-weeding will continue. Union Flat Creek, three other small creeks, and six springs and seeps that are overgrown with RCG also need to be rehabilitated with Palouse native shrubs.

This year also, hand weeding the Palouse wildflower and bunchgrass prairie upstream on the canyon slopes of Dogwood Creek is being intensified. Please come weeding-while-walking on the deer trails this wildflower spring. And the rest of the farm's prairies, the pine forest wilderness on the canyon wall across Union Flat Creek, as well as alongside the creek and road are still to be weeded. Updates on this effort are planned, as well as reports on future restoration work at Dogwood Creek. Please leave any comments or advice—especially about spraying—to Ronnie Hatley at [dogwoodcreekfarm@yahoo.com](mailto:dogwoodcreekfarm@yahoo.com).

## April Is Native Plant Appreciation Month

By Kim Sarff

April—what a suitable month to appreciate native plants. The Washington Native Plant Society is posting a variety of activities to celebrate our regional ecosystems. You can go to the [WNPS website](#) to see what's happening throughout April.

- Panel discussion: The Challenges Facing Forest Ecosystems in Washington.
- Conversation with Jerry Franklin, Northwest educated researcher, ecologist, and professor: 21st-Century Challenges in Douglas-Fir Forests.
- Poetry as presented by Washington State's Poet Laureate Rena Priest: Celebrating Our Native Trees With Poetry.
- Discussion with Lynda Mapes, author of *Witness Tree: Seasons of Change With a Century-Old Oak*.
- Webinar with David Peter, U.S. Forest Service: The White Oak of the NW: The Story of an Arboreal Shape-Shifter

They are accepting additional events to post, so expect their calendar of events to grow.

Perhaps by April you will be ready to get out and see some plants. Below are some links to a few destinations worth learning about:

- [Palisades Park](#) (Spokane)
- [McCroskey State Park](#) (between Farmington and Highway 95)
- [Rose Creek Nature Preserve](#) (near Albion)
- [Kamiak Butte](#) (west of Highway 27, north of Pullman)



# Meet the 2022 Board of Directors



David Hall, President, earned two bachelor's degrees at the University of Idaho—one in Computer Science and one in Mathematics—and a master's degree in Computer Science. His father was a professor of geomorphology at UI, and the earth sciences rubbed off on David. He is retired from the U.S. Forest Service Research Station in Moscow where he programmed simulations of landslides and soil erosion effects following forest fires. David is interested in protecting the remaining native Palouse Prairie, and the region's groundwater resources. He has been involved with the Palouse Prairie Foundation since its founding.



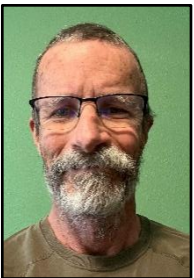
Elisabeth Brackney, Vice President, moved to Moscow 31 years ago to obtain a master's degree in UI's College of Natural Resources. She worked for the Nez Perce Tribe as a Wetlands Ecologist before retiring. A large part of her work involved native plant identification. She was particularly intrigued by remnants of native prairie, found next to some of the wetlands she assessed. As a board member of the Palouse Prairie Foundation, she hopes to help protect and restore these special ecosystems on the Palouse.



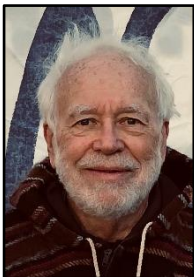
Joan Folwell, Treasurer, moved to the Palouse in 1968 from the prairies of Illinois. She is trained as a zoologist and is an enthusiastic, but undisciplined and naive, gardener. She lives north of Pullman on 20 acres. Since 2005, she and her husband, Ray, have been involved in a prairie restoration on what had been a wheat farm for nearly 100 years. She also actively participates in the preservation of prairie remnants in Whitman County.



Shelley Chambers-Fox, Secretary, developed her interests in gardening, weeds, and Palouse Prairie when she and her husband moved to their 24-acre farm located between Albion and Colfax. The untillable remnant of a homestead includes a small strip of Palouse Prairie. Through her training as a Master Gardener and what she learns from her involvement with the Palouse Prairie Foundation, Shelley hopes to restore the land to its former diversity and beauty.



Tom Besser, Member-at-Large, moved to the Palouse in 1981 and taught and carried out microbiological research at WSU's Veterinary College until his retirement in 2019. In the past ten years, he was introduced to Palouse Prairie from field trips and presentations sponsored by the Palouse Prairie Foundation. Five years ago, with invaluable help of other local prairie enthusiasts, he started a 3.5-acre Palouse Prairie reconstruction project on a section of a former wheat field next to his home. As a board member, Tom is interested in protecting and restoring Palouse Prairie and sharing his enthusiasm for Palouse Prairie with others.



Ronnie Hatley, Member-at-Large, moved with his family to their farm in Union Flat in 1947. During his school years he helped his father clear the farm of hawthorn "brush" and pines increasing the 215-acre farm's cropland from 40 to 105 acres. Walking every day up the prairie hillside to fetch the cows to milk, he never saw a wildflower. A lifelong student of Indonesia, he lived and taught 16 years in Indonesia, 18 in Australia, and 14 at WSU and the UI. Everywhere he's lived, he's been an active environmentalist. He is now transforming his 100-acre farm into a Palouse Native Plants preserve-restoration-production-research farm. In 2022, besides hosting Wild Palouse Flower Walks up the deer trails at Dogwood Creek Farm, he hopes to popularize Weeding-While-Walking Walks.

# Are You Eligible for a Mini-Grant?



The Palouse Prairie Foundation (PPF) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote the preservation and restoration of native Palouse Prairie ecosystems in Whitman County, Washington, and Latah County, Idaho. To this end, PPF supports the following efforts:

- To raise public awareness about plants, animals, and other biota found in the prairie, and the ecological functions that they carry out to sustain it.
- To raise public awareness about issues threatening the prairie and opportunities to conserve it.
- To develop educational materials and curricula for prairie conservation.
- To conduct research regarding the prairie.
- To restore degraded local prairie lands.
- To increase seed availability for use in local restoration.

The Palouse Prairie once extended over hundreds of thousands of acres. Because of the region's deep fertile soils, the prairie has been converted to a highly productive agricultural region. Less than one percent of the prairie remains today. Fortunately, many small patches of prairie remain to provide superlative carbon sequestration; native plant seed sources; pollinator habitat; habitat for rare animals such as the giant Palouse earthworm (*Driloleirus americanus*) and rare plants including Spalding's catchfly (*Silene spaldingii*), Jessica's aster (*Aster jessicae*), and Palouse thistle (*Cirsium brevifolium*). Many people value its intrinsic beauty. PPF is committed to helping individuals and organizations to conserve and restore these prairie remnants to increase habitat connectivity and long-term sustainability of the ecosystem.

PPF has a mini-grant program available to the public for the conservation and restoration of Palouse Prairie. The maximum grant is \$1,000. Visit the PPF web site ([PalousePrairie.org](http://PalousePrairie.org)) for information about some of the mini-grants that have been awarded.

Reimbursement will be made after receipts itemizing project costs are submitted to PPF.

Recipients are asked to present an oral or written concluding report.

To apply, submit the following information to [secretary@palouseprairie.org](mailto:secretary@palouseprairie.org) or mail to Palouse Prairie Foundation, P.O. Box 8952, Moscow, ID 83843.

1. Organization name.
2. Organization mailing address.
3. Name, email address, and phone number of primary contact person.
4. Description of the proposal, including the following information:
  - a. Description of the project and how it supports the mission of PPF.
  - b. Approximate start and end dates and significant stages of project progress.
  - c. Requested funding level, maximum \$1,000.
  - d. Proposed budget, including a short list of budget items.
5. If this application is part of a larger proposal or project with another funding source, briefly describe.



## 2022 Palouse Prairie Foundation Membership Letter

**PRESERVE – PROTECT – PROMOTE**

**Why should you support the Palouse Prairie Foundation with your 2022 membership?**

In 2021, the Palouse Prairie Foundation:

- Conducted a weeding party at Whelan Cemetery with the participation of The Phoenix Conservancy and other great volunteers; continued the removal and surveillance of invading lilac bushes partially funded by a Washington Native Plant Society grant; supported the successful award of a three-year grant to the Palouse Conservation District to continue maintenance of the on-site Spalding’s catchfly (*Silene spaldingii*) population.
- Continued to develop the John Crock Native Plant and Pollinator Garden along the Latah Trail by controlling weeds; planted 225 native forbs and scattered native plant seeds mostly donated by Thorn Creek Native Seed Farm with the efforts of Elisabeth Brackney and other board members and volunteers; monitored the development of previously planted shrubs and native grasses.
- Awarded a \$1,000 mini-grant to The Phoenix Conservancy for material to grow forbs for native planting sites in Pullman; awarded a \$1,000 grant to the Appaloosa Horse and Heritage Center for signage at their public native garden display.
- Provided outreach to Eastern Washington University and Washington State University graduate students and researchers and allowed soil sample collection from Whelan Cemetery to compare the influence on growing wheat between native soil and various farmed soils.

Your support of PPF is a direct benefit to **YOU**:

- Receive invitations to local-area field trips.
- Get direct access to the expertise and experience of other restorers and protectors of the Prairie.
- Participate in the activity of your choice to help preserve this important ecosystem.
- The Palouse Prairie Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and **donations are tax deductible.**

Email messages are the primary way that members are notified of all events and news. Please pay [online](#) via credit card or PayPal, or provide the membership information requested below and send it with your payment to:

Palouse Prairie Foundation, P.O. Box 8952, Moscow, Idaho 83843-1452.

**THANK YOU!**

Membership Information

Name	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$10
Street Address	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$20
City, State, Zip	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$35
E-mail Address	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime	\$250
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Donation	\$_____
		TOTAL ENCLOSED	\$_____

I'm interested in:  John Crock Garden  Whelan Cemetery  Other \_\_\_\_\_